



## **Minutes of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel**

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023, 10.30am**

**John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE**

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### **Present:**

#### **Local Authority and Independent Member Representatives:**

Councillor Andy Wait (Bath and North-East Somerset), Councillor Ann Morgan (Bath and North-East Somerset), Councillor Asher Craig (Bristol City Council), Councillor Jonathan Hucker (Bristol City Council), Councillor Lisa Stone (Bristol City Council), Gary Davies (Independent Member), Julie Knight (Independent Member), Councillor Peter Crew (North Somerset Council), Councillor Stuart Davies (North Somerset Council), Councillor Brian Bolt (Somerset Council), Councillor Heather Shearer (Somerset Council and Chair), Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts (Somerset Council), Councillor Martin Wale (Somerset Council), Councillor Nicola Clark (Somerset Council), Councillor Raj Sood (South Gloucestershire Council), Councillor John Bradbury (South Gloucestershire Council)

#### **Host Authority Officers Present:**

Patricia Jones	Panel Lead Officer
Pippa Triffitt	Clerk/Democratic Services Officer

#### **Police and Crime Commissioner and Support Staff:**

Mark Shelford	Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Alice Ripley	Chief of Staff
Inspector Stuart King	Commissioner's Staff Officer
Paul Butler	Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
Joanna Coulon	Scrutiny and Performance Manager
Ben Valentine	Senior Performance and Governance Manager

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Independent Member Richard Brown.

## **2. Membership Update**

The Panel welcomed Councillor Stuart Davies, the new representative from North Somerset Council.

## **3. Public Question Time**

The Chair informed the Panel that one question had been received from Westerleigh and Coalpit Heath Parish Council in South Gloucestershire and that it would be taken at the introduction of Agenda Item 10.

## **4. Declarations of Interest**

None.

## **5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023.**

The minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

## **6. Matters Arising**

The Chair invited comments on the actions arising from the previous meeting. The following discussion ensued:

- The Chair highlighted the action point in which the PCC asked Panel members to raise the issue of site spaces for the former prisoner accommodation programme with their respective local authorities if the opportunity arose. Councillor Smith-Roberts drew attention to the multiple existing duties for councils to provide accommodation for the homeless, asylum seekers and others, and requested that the PCC organised a meeting with the Lead Members for Communities/Housing in the force area to discuss the matter further; the PCC agreed. He added that Bristol had already provided land to the scheme and that positive results were emerging; 2 former prisoners were now fully

employed and 55 were currently undergoing the programme. Councillor Craig stated that she hoped a diverse group of people were benefiting from the scheme and requested a diversity breakdown. The PCC agreed to provide this information, reminding the Panel that those taking part were all volunteers in the programme.

- The Panel thanked the PCC for responding to their request to provide more detail on the number of leavers from the force between July 2022 and July 2023, but raised concerns over the high percentage of resignations, which stood at 42%. The PCC assured the Panel that work was on-going to identify the reasons for this. In addition, it was vital that morale was monitored constantly to pre-empt reasons linked to dissatisfaction. In relation to this, the PCC was championing gallantry medals to celebrate the valour of individuals. A guidance document had been developed and shared with PCCs and Chief Constables nationally. The Panel praised this piece of work and suggested the OPCC used social media to extend the recognition.

The Chair highlighted the work taking place to foster positive relations between the PCC and local Community Safety Partnerships, and suggested an agenda item was added to the work programme to discuss this further.

#### **Actions:**

- 1. The PCC to organise a meeting between the Lead Members for Communities/Housing in the force area to discuss the former prisoner accommodation programme.**
- 2. The PCC to provide a diversity breakdown of the prisoners volunteering in the accommodation programme.**
- 3. The Lead Officer to add an agenda item to the Work Programme pertaining to the collaboration between the PCC and local Community Safety Partnerships.**

## **7. Chair's Business**

The Chair informed the Panel that she, the Lead Officer, and Independent Member and Vice Chair Julie Knight had attended the Annual Conference of the National Association of Police, Fire, and Crime Panels on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November. The Chair stated the Report had been circulated to the Panel Members and suggested it should be circulated to the OPCC after the meeting.

**Actions:**

- 1. The Lead Officer to share the Panel's Report on the Annual Conference of the National Association of Police, Fire, and Crime Panels with the OPCC.**

**8. Strategic Plan for the Police Estate in Avon and Somerset**

The Chair invited the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to introduce the Report.

The CFO presented the Report, highlighting the introduction which provided assurance to the Panel that plans were in place for the Police Estate and were monitored on an ongoing basis. Sustainability was a focal point of the Report; it came with significant financial challenges, particularly in relation to the force's decarbonisation commitments, but it was acknowledged that sustainability needed to be a central consideration. The Estates team aimed to maximise the grants available, as expensive environmentally friendly equipment could only be purchased where there was additional funding available. However, this did impact on the timescales of projects. Finally, it was emphasised that electric vehicles were vital to the force's sustainability commitments. Negotiations continued with central government and electric infrastructure providers. It was only now that the scale of the challenge was being quantified, as it was estimated that £12 million was required over the next few years to create the necessary infrastructure, which posed problems in terms of funding in addition to issues with the lack of capacity in the electrical grids. However, the project was live and considered a priority.

The Chair thanked the CFO for his Report and invited questions and comments from the Panel. The following is a summary of the discussion:

- The Panel raised concerns that the Report made little mention of risk and asked whether the 8 projects would be assessed individually or together, and whether the consultants used would be external. The CFO confirmed the projects would be risk assessed individually by external consultants. The overall risk would then be assessed by the CFO and the OPCC before the MTFP was finalised.
- The Panel highlighted that working practices were still in flux in the wake of the pandemic and questioned how future expectations were being managed. It was possible, for example, for too many buildings to be sold or repurposed whilst the workforce continued to work remotely when possible, only for these buildings to be needed if working solely

from the office became the norm again. The PCC stated the Constabulary were maximising their resources to balance the two working environments. He assured the Panel that the issue of workspace was under constant review. The CFO added that it was a scrutiny focal point; for example, the Estate Area Management Board had reviewed the use of the HQ buildings that week. The Constabulary had also reviewed all employee contracts and confirmed the staff members' work locations, which helped them determine what space was required. These reviews would be repeated in the future to ensure the information was up to date. There was general agreement that the strategy needed to be alert to how things might change over time.

- The Panel were pleased that the Report took public confidence into consideration, such as ensuring buildings had a diverse range of purposes, but questioned how the buildings were assessed for these purposes. The PCC confirmed that surveys of the workforce were conducted to determine what they required. In addition, data was gathered when the PCC and Chief Constable conducted walkabouts. The CFO added that the Estate Team had developed a design standard for police stations, which had a basic set of principles that needed to be taken into account. Requirements for each locality was also a consideration; for example, consultation had been undertaken with staff to share their concerns and priorities for the new building.
- The Panel questioned why the force was spending more than the national average on Estates, despite having 21% fewer buildings and a higher rental income than the national average. The CFO agreed to investigate this further and share the information with the Panel.
- The Panel praised the use of electric vehicles and asked whether the Estate Team had considered using super-chargers to reduce vehicle charging times. It was acknowledged that there may be infrastructure issues, but it was the preferred option in order to prevent fleet cars remaining off the road for long periods of time.
- The Panel asked whether the Estate Team were confident that the carbon emission targets would be met. The PCC confirmed they were aiming to reduce carbon emissions as much as possible but not at the expense of operational requirements; it was an important balance to strike. The CFO added that the plan had to be flexible due to the rapidly changing technology and the fluctuating costs associated with it.

- The Panel asked how the plan supported the aim to make the Estate as accessible as possible to members of the public. The PCC confirmed that they regularly reviewed the location and size of police stations across the force area to optimise the service to the community. The issue of enquiry desks was constantly reviewed; footfall within stations had remained stable but online reporting of incidents had increased exponentially, and these trends were likely to continue. Online reporting was more efficient, but it was acknowledged that the public wanted the option of talking to a member of staff in person. Therefore, part of the strategy was to avoid removing public police stations unless there was a compensating public-facing function to replace it.

**Actions:**

- 1. The CFO to share with the Panel the reasons why the force was spending more than the national average on Estates, despite having 21% fewer buildings and a higher rental income than the national average.**

## **9. Financial Planning – Budget Process Update**

The Chair invited the CFO to present the Report. The following is a summary of the presentation:

- The CFO clarified the paper was not a draft budget or MTFP as the information for this was not yet available; however, the Report was useful for sharing the current assumptions and projections, what was known, and what was still unknown.
- Savings initiatives were under consideration, and these would continue throughout the year. A key strategic planning meeting had taken place the week before to review the progress on this.
- The key planning assumption at this stage was an increase in the policing precept of £10 per annum in 2024/25 for an average Band D property, which was in line with the current maximum increase permitted.
- Page 33 of the Report showed the projections for Council Tax modelled on an increase of £10 and an increase of 2.0% per annum thereafter. The final decision on the precept level would be made on consideration of the Panel's feedback, on conclusion of the public consultation and in

the context of the increased certainty that was expected once the grant settlement had been confirmed.

- Page 34 showed where the MTFP was in terms of deficit; there was a forecasted deficit of £3.3 million from 2024/25, which would rise to £23.8 million by 2028/29. This was largely due to increasing pension costs, investments, and inflation.
- The CFO was confident that next year's budget would be balanced with the current savings plans in place.
- There was an estimated deficit of £39.3 million in the capital plans by 2028/9 which reflected cuts to capital grant funding, ERP project costs, and Estates projects.
- The CFO acknowledged that the increase in the precept by 6% the previous year was accepted but not well received by the Panel.
- The current central government funding formula meant that Avon and Somerset had less funding in comparison to other forces with major cities, and this greatly impacted how services were delivered. The force would receive an extra £113 million per year if the formula imbalance was redressed. Therefore, they are working with much less funding to deliver a similar Plan.
- The force received a multi-year settlement 3 years ago which provided more certainty, but they were now entering another period of uncertainty, especially with the election scheduled for 2024 and the impact of inflation.
- Nationally, Avon and Somerset had performed well; nearly 1,500 officers had been recruited between 2019 and 2023. This created a very young workforce and meant Avon and Somerset had the most officers in training of any force in the country. This created additional financial demands.
- The 7% pay award created financial pressures. The grant funding covered the costs in 2023, but a shortfall of £500,000 remained in 2024/25. This would multiply due to officers moving up the ranks.
- The pensions grant (currently ringfenced) was a large part of the budget and was due to be incorporated into the main grant. This created risk

because its effects on overall costs issues would be harder to decipher going forward.

- In terms of Council Tax, 68% of properties in the force area were in Bands A-C, so would pay less than those in Band D and below. The CFO offered to share a chart showing this breakdown. Increasing the tax base, rather than increasing the precept, was the preferred method of raising funds. However, whereas the previous year saw an increase of 1% in the tax base, this year saw an increase of only 0.5%. The PCC was currently undertaking a public consultation on the precept which would feed into February's report.
- Council Tax comprised 45% of total funding and would increase over the course of the MTFP. It was acknowledged this would add more pressure on residents in the force area.
- The collection fund represented the force's share of the surplus of deficit as calculated by the five collecting authorities. For 2024/25, a deficit of £300,000 was forecasted that would need covering. The core grant funding was due to increase by 1.6% in 2024/25, but the final values of the grant funding would not be confirmed until mid-December.
- Specific areas of interest that were forecast to increase in cost were laid out on pages 40-42. These included IT costs, the new Deferred Prosecution Model, and trainee learning cost.
- Investment in areas identified as key priorities would continue, for example Lighthouse and vetting processes.
- In terms of balancing the revenue budget, the force had identified £2 million in savings from police staff pay. Staffing remained the primary factor in balancing the budget (80% could be attributed to staffing costs). It was the only area where significant savings could be made to balance the budget.
- The capital plan was laid out on page 43 and showed the lack of capital grants. The deficit would be primarily funded by loans, with a contribution of £6.5 million from revenue funding.
- Asset replacement included IT, Estates, fleet, and equipment replacement. The IT upgrades were largely driven by national



requirements, and digital projects formed a major part of the investment programme. The Trinity Project was a key Estates project; their partners had given final approval so this would receive capital receipt in the New Year that supported the capital plan. The use of electric vehicles presented further costs through the required infrastructure.

- The next steps were set out on page 46. Confirmation of the tax base, the government grant settlement, the collection fund, and the savings plans were needed before the final proposal was brought to the Panel in February.

The Chair thanked the CFO for his Report and presentation and invited questions and comments from the Panel. The following is a summary of the ensuing discussion:

- The Panel recalled the public consultation survey on the precept, which stated a range of different scenarios and staffing changes depending on the precept level. The CFO agreed to provide the calculations that underpinned the scenarios after the meeting.
- The Panel queried why the figure for total revenue expenditure of £373,132,000 for 2024/25 stated in the Report was different to the figure of £367,783,000 stated in the Quarter 2 outturn report. The CFO agreed to provide an explanation of this discrepancy, but summarised that the difference was primarily due to how the expenditure had been netted off within the current forecast. A breakdown of where the movement was could be provided.
- The Panel questioned why the figure for revenue expenditure was considerably higher than the budgeted figure, whereas the forecast outturn figure was significantly lower than the budgeted figure. The CFO suggested the Panel submitted this question in writing and he would supply an answer.
- In terms of the Report's presentation. the Panel suggested the Report should show the revenue account for the current year as being in deficit, rather than in surplus.
- The Panel asked whether the funding leftover from the cost of the pay award could be utilised elsewhere. The CFO confirmed the surplus was locked in and could not be retrieved.

- The Panel asked how the figures for capital funding on page 43 correlated to cash movements. The CFO confirmed that cash helped to manage short-term costs. Cash balances had been utilised this year and would be utilised next year to delay drawing down loans. They would ensure it did not affect the general reserves of cash.
- The Panel recalled that the annual statement of accounts shared at the end of the last financial year showed there were capital reserves of £3 million in cash and asked whether this figure will have reduced by the end of this year. The CFO confirmed that cash balances would remain reasonably stable; it was the capital reserves that were likely to reduce. The Panel asked whether there was a preferred minimum level of cash on the balance sheet; the CFO confirmed there was but that an exact figure was difficult to define.
- The Panel questioned the significant underspends and overspends. The CFO explained that managing the budget meant ending the year with a surplus rather than a deficit, and that coming in within budget meant coming in within £1 million. The forecasting for this is more accurate now than ever before. Significant under- and overspends balanced each other out, whereas others were self-balancing. For example, vacancies caused large underspends, but overtime balanced this out. Consultancy and agency costs may add to this.
- The Panel highlighted the cost issues caused by the Speed Enforcement Unit. The CFO explained that recruitment and retention had caused these issues. The PCC added that the purpose of speed enforcement cameras was to protect the public and not to generate income.
- The Panel acknowledged that the financial situation for Avon and Somerset was different to other forces nationally due to the lower Council Tax base. However, there had to be a limit on asking the public to make up the difference in funding. The PCC explained that a previous government changed the emphasis on funding to make local authorities take on a larger share of the tax base; he would share the dates regarding this with the Panel. Nationally, PCCs had worked with Home Secretaries and policing ministers to revert to the historical balance in funding, but central government had proved sympathetic yet resistant. A consultation was due to be launched after the election on this matter. The PCC stated he was also working with policing ministers

as well as the CFO on the capital budget to ensure the grants were provided in the most effective way. Furthermore, the Constabulary were adept at making accurate projections, and Avon and Somerset were one of the only forces with a timely audit.

- The Panel suggested there needed to be more public awareness on the government's disproportionate funding mechanism that disadvantaged the force area and the over-reliance by the government on local taxation to maintain the service. The PCC agreed and stated he had been asking the local councils to add a flyer from Avon and Somerset to the Council Tax bills since the start of his term to ensure the public were alert to the precept element and how this funding was used.
- The Panel highlighted the graphic on page 35 and suggested that higher amounts of funding did not always correlate to an improvement in performance. It demonstrated how being effective with the funding provided was vital. The PCC agreed but emphasised that the balance in funding still needed to be fairer to prevent the burden falling on the precept.
- The Panel emphasised that the public needed to know what they would receive in return for the precept money. Within the community, it seemed there had been little noticeable change since the increased precept last year. The PCC assured the Panel that huge improvements had been made; for example, the CID was now fully staffed, having had only one-third of the required staff at the start of his term, and crime rates were reducing. The PCC advised the Panel that questions regarding numbers of frontline staff should be directed at the Chief Constable, and that he would cover this topic at the next Performance and Accountability Board meeting.
- The Panel were concerned that the number of young officers meant that Avon and Somerset was a more inexperienced force, and that the officers may not be equipped to deal with the issues they would face. The PCC suggested that questions regarding the training of officers and whether it was sufficient should be directed at the Chief Constable.
- The Panel questioned why consultation surveys usually showed that the public supported an increase in the precept, when the comments Councillors received from their residents suggested otherwise. The PCC confirmed that the consultation had gone live and explained that

experience had shown the public ultimately do respect the necessity of financially supporting the police force.

- Cllr Crew praised the Chief Constable's response to his request for a strengthened Neighbourhood Policing Team in Weston after the increase in the precept last year; the Community Response Officers had also been retrained and given more powers.

**Actions:**

- 1. The CFO to share a graphic showing the breakdown in Council Tax bands and precept levels across the force area.**
- 2. The CFO to respond to the Panel's question on why the figure for revenue expenditure was considerably higher than the budgeted figure, whereas the forecast outturn figure was significantly lower than the budgeted figure.**
- 3. The PCC to share details with the Panel pertaining to a previous government's decision to alter the balance in police funding between central government and local authorities.**
- 4. The PCC to question the Chief Constable on the numbers of frontline staff at the Performance and Accountability Board meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023.**

## **10. Commissioner's Update Report**

The Chair introduced the public question submitted by Westerleigh and Coalpit Heath Parish Council which focused on the issue of speeding and vehicles exceeding the weight limit on local routes following the closure of the A432 overbridge in South Gloucestershire. The PCC suggested that because the question pertained to a specific local area, it would be most usefully addressed by the Constabulary. However, it was recognised that similar issues were experienced across the whole force area, therefore the Panel felt it was important to address. The Chair asked the PCC what assurance he was receiving on the matter.

The PCC acknowledged that speeding was an issue across the force area and emphasised that a collaboration between the police and local government was required to effectively address it. He was in conversation with the Chief Constable but had not received definitive assurance that the Constabulary was doing all it could. However, he did receive updates from the responsible officers and had witnessed positive change in how the information from the

Community Speed Watch was being used by the Constabulary to effect change.

The Chair turned to the Commissioner's Update Report and invited questions and comments from the Panel. The following is a summary of the discussion:

- The Panel emphasised that road safety and Vision Zero should be a priority. The PCC confirmed that he and the Chief Constable were pushing to make Vision Zero a flagstone of the force. In terms of the safety issues surrounding e-scooters, the PCC had set up a National E-Scooter Safety Advisory Group to explore the issues and promote that e-scooters were properly designed and maintained and were subject to law enforcement. Although e-scooters available for public hire could legally be used on roads, private ones could not, and it was difficult to enforce the laws around this. The Advisory Group did not cover the criminal use of e-bikes, but there was an operation order on them. The Panel emphasised that road safety needed to be taught in schools from a young age, and that the curriculum now needed to include e-scooters and e-bikes.
- The Panel informed the PCC that they received comments and complaints from their constituents about speed cameras. The PCC advised the Panel to submit these to him in writing and he would provide answers.
- The Panel asked whether the lack of public confidence had impacted on the recruitment of officers and requested a breakdown in the diversity of the 1484 staff acquired through uplift in the four years leading to March 2023. The PCC stated that there had been some improvement in increasing the racial diversity in the recruitment process, but it was not as significant as it could have been. The PCC advised the Panel to take up the matter with the Chief Constable.
- The Panel asked for information on the general themes of the force's promotional courses and the training package for new officers. The PCC advised the Panel to direct any questions on this matter to the Chief Constable.
- The Panel mentioned the Deferred Prosecution scheme, and asked whether this would replace the 'Call In' system currently in place in Bristol. The PCC confirmed that the force was piloting a slightly different diversion system; it formed part of the Tackling

Disproportionality work and followed the example of the Chance to Change Programme used in the Metropolitan and West Midlands police forces.

- Cllr Craig informed the PCC that the unions continued to experience delays in receiving DBS checks. The PCC explained he had investigated this issue 6 months ago, although DBS checks were under the control of the Home Office, not the police force, therefore there was a limit to his influence. The PCC advised the Panel to put their concerns in writing and he would pass them on.
- The Panel raised issues that were occurring in rural areas, including the use of narrow rural roads by HGVs, and low-level anti-social behaviour in public spaces and play areas. The lack of police presence in rural areas meant there was little deterrent. The Panel requested that the plan to tackle anti-social behaviour took rural areas into account in addition to urban areas. The PCC agreed that rural communities needed to be considered and advised the Panel to report the specific villages and public spaces in question to inform the policing response.
- The Panel emphasised the importance of community engagement across the whole force area, and asked the PCC how he organised his diary to address this. The PCC informed the Panel that his timetable was split into sets of 9 weeks, and he visited 2 of the 18 constituencies per week. The Chief of Staff added that the OPCC had a new Community Engagement Manager and that he was currently working on a gap analysis to ensure the PCC was engaging with a wide variety of communities across the force area.
- The Panel requested an update on the response to the Chief Constable's declaration of institutional racism, and asked how the public would learn of the positive changes taking place. The PCC confirmed the work taking place in response continued and was integrated with the work on tackling disproportionality. There had been a Criminal Justice Board meeting the day before which included a brief on the ongoing work. The Senior Performance and Governance Manager added that they planned to produce communications on specific aspects of the initiative when appropriate. The Panel questioned whether the work on tackling disproportionality was broad enough to encompass the implications of the Chief Constable's declaration; the PCC assured the Panel the two were tied together.

- The Panel asked how and when the first independent scrutiny board meeting, scrutinising delivery of the Identifying Disproportionality programme, would be taking place. The OPCC stated the date had not been confirmed but they were currently working with the Chair to support training and plan the scrutiny process, whilst remaining mindful that the board needed to remain as independent as possible.
- The Panel praised the prioritisation of preventing violence against women and girls and highlighted the commentary on page 53 of the Report. The Panel asked if there was any evidence to prove there had been a reduction in incidents as a result of this work. The PCC explained that it was too soon to draw a conclusion, but a clearer answer would be obtained over the next few years. Analysis from the DRIVE programme (working with domestic abuse perpetrators) did show there had been 100 fewer reported incidents than the previous year, which was a positive sign, but this needed to improve further.
- The Panel highlighted the importance of education in changing attitudes towards women at a young age in order to break the cycle. The PCC agreed and informed the Panel that he had contacted the Centre for Police Research and Learning to ask for a study on the targeted messages given to children at different ages between 4 and 18 that had the most effect in relation to violence against women and girls, drugs, and knife crime. Furthermore, he championed community service organisations being part of the curriculum, such as Scouts and Cadets; he had written to the Duke of Edinburgh on this topic and had a meeting with the Education Minister scheduled. The PCC emphasised that a collaboration between Local Government, Police, Health, and Education was required to make the most effective difference.

The Chair thanked the Panel members for their questions and comments and emphasised the importance of encouraging residents to report issues to the police. She invited the PCC to add any further comments he wished to make on his Report. The following is a summary of the presentation:

- The PCC informed the Panel that whilst there had been anecdotal evidence of an increase in hate crime since the conflict began in Israel and Gaza, the local performance figures did not support this. The PCC was engaging with faith communities locally, meeting with different community leaders, and the Constabulary were supporting efforts in London and elsewhere to police protests.

- The PCC announced that the survey on the policing precept had gone live and encouraged the Panel members to complete it and promote it through their networks.
- Work had begun on the recommissioning victim services; the engagement period would run until the end of January and the Panel members' support would be welcomed.
- The PCC also encouraged the Panel members to promote volunteering opportunities with the independent custody scheme through their networks. The initial press campaign had proved a success, with 22 expressions of interest on the first day alone.
- The Panel praised the PCC for holding the Chief Constable to account at the Performance and Accountability Board but suggested that his questions could be answered more succinctly. The PCC encouraged the Panel to submit any questions they wished him to ask the Chief Constable in writing.
- The Panel highlighted the progress made in increasing conviction rates for rape. The PCC acknowledged that progress had been made, but reassured the Panel that more work would be done to improve the figures further. The Criminal Justice Board had been updated the previous day that a specialist rape court would be set up to process these cases.
- The Panel members thanked the OPCC for their work and asked for their thanks to be extended to the rest of the team and the frontline force members.

**Actions:**

- 1. The Constabulary to respond to the public question from Westerleigh and Coalpit Heath Parish Council in writing.**
- 2. The Panel members to submit any questions they had pertaining to, but not restricted to, speed cameras and DBS checks to the PCC in writing, if necessary.**
- 3. The Panel members to complete the public consultation survey on the precept and promote through their networks.**

**11. Performance Summary/National Police and Crime Measures**



The Chair invited comments from the Panel on the Report. The following discussion ensued:

- The Panel questioned why the chart on page 73 showed that victim satisfaction in relation to burglary had reduced over the 3 years between September 2020 and September 2023, and yet the commentary stated that dwelling burglary had a high satisfaction rate. The Senior Performance and Governance Manager explained that higher levels of victim satisfaction were received in relation to dwelling burglaries as they generally received a higher level of service compared to other burglaries due to being residential buildings. The Panel asked about the nature of the non-residential burglaries; the OPCC agreed to check the types of burglaries the data covered and share this with the Panel.
- The Panel asked for clarification on the term '4P'. The Senior Performance and Governance Manager explained that this referred to a nationally recognised policing strategy for dealing with crime, based on Prepare, Prevent, Protect, and Pursue. This definition was available in the glossary provided in the Report.
- The Panel indicated the chart showing the trends in personal robberies on page 71 and questioned the fairness of the commentary that stated the number of robberies in Bristol caused the force area to have higher levels than its Most Similar Group (MSG). The Senior Performance and Governance Manager clarified that the force area's higher robbery rates were driven by Bristol; if Bristol was removed from the data, robbery figures would be below those of the MSG.
- The Panel highlighted the commentary on page 72 which stated that the on-going promotion of fraud-awareness was linked to national campaigns. The Panel asked whether campaign presentations were available locally for parish councils. The Senior Performance and Governance Manager explained that the Cyber Protection Officers in the force provided advice and support to victims, but also to organisations and broader groups of people. The Chief of Staff stated the PCC took a particular interest in the issue of cybercrime due to his national APCC portfolio lead and was working with the Constabulary to disseminate advice on fraud prevention through multiple media channels. The CFO added that the South West Cyber Resilience Centre (SWCRC) worked with organisations and could provide presentations or

meetings on this matter. The Panel members were advised to contact the OPCC in the first instance and the expressions of interest would be forwarded to the SWCRC.

**Actions:**

- 1. The OPCC to share with the Panel the types of burglaries the data on page 73 covered.**
- 2. The Panel members to contact the OPCC with expressions of interest to be forwarded to the SWCRC, if necessary.**

## **12. Standing Complaints Report**

The Report was noted.

## **13. Work Programme**

The Chair invited comments from the Panel on the Work Programme.

Julie Knight asked whether reports from the Budget Task Group Sub-Committee and the Public Trust and Confidence Sub-Committee needed adding to the Work Programme.

The Lead Officer explained that the Panel's statutory Precept report would be the main report for the Budget Task Group. As the Public Trust and Confidence Sub-Committee was likely to extend into the next year, a report could be tabled into next year's work programme.

The Work Programme was otherwise noted.

**Actions:**

- 1. The Lead Officer to include a report from the Public Trust and Confidence Sub-Committee into next year's Work Programme.**

## **14. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for 10:30am on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024 at Deane House, Taunton.